GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY
LOK SABHA

STARRED QUESTION NO:144
ANSWERED ON:04.05.2016
Impact of Mobile Radiation
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Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government has identified those Base Transceiver Stations (BTS) which are/were violating Electro Magnetic Frequency (EMF) norms;

(b) if so, the number of BTS identified during the last three years and the current year, State-wise and the corrective follow-up action taken by the Government thereon;

(c) whether any empirical scientific research/studies have been conducted world over on the impact of radiation from mobile towers and handsets on humans and other living beings and if so, the details thereof; and

(d) whether any action has been taken to make aware the citizens of the country about the deleterious effects of electro-magnetic radiation on human life and if so, the details thereof?

Answer

THE MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY
(SHRI RAVI SHANKAR PRASAD)

(a) to (d) A Statement is laid on the Table of the House.

STATEMENT TO BE LAID ON THE TABLE OF THE LOK SABHA IN RESPECT OF PARTS (a) TO (d) OF LOK SABHA STARRED QUESTION NO. 144 FOR 4th MAY, 2016 REGARDING "IMPACT OF MOBILE RADIATION".

(a) & (b) Yes Madam. During the audit carried out by Telecom Enforcement, Resource and Monitoring (TERM) Cells, 108 number of Base Transceiver Stations (BTSs) have been found exceeding the prescribed EMF radiation limits in the last three years i.e. calendar year 2013, 2014, 2015 and the current year 2016 (upto 29.02.2016). Licensed Service Area wise (LSA-wise) details of these BTSs is attached at Annexure-I.

For all these non-compliant BTSs found during testing, TERM Cells have imposed applicable financial penalty amounting to Rs 6.60 crores on defaulting TSPs as per the prescribed DoT guidelines. Further, one BTS in Haryana LSA was shut down by the defaulting TSP and for the remaining non-compliant BTSs, radiation levels have been brought within prescribed radiation limits.

(c) & (d) With regard to impact of radiation from mobile towers and handsets, several studies have been conducted in different countries, under the aegis of World Health Organization (WHO). WHO has referred to approximately 25,000 articles published around the world over past 30 years, and based on an in-depth review of scientific literature, has stated, "Despite the feeling of some people that more research needs to be done, scientific knowledge in this area is now more extensive than for most chemicals." and concluded "current evidence does not confirm the existence of any health consequences from exposure to low level electromagnetic fields".

With reference to Electromagnetic Radiation emanating from cellular mobile towers, World Health Organization (WHO) in its Fact Sheet No. 304, May 2006 on Electromagnetic Fields and Public Health (Base Stations and Wireless Technologies) has concluded that "considering the very low exposure levels and research results collected to date, there is no convincing scientific evidence that the weak RF Signals from base stations and wireless networks caused adverse health effects. From all evidence accumulated so far, no adverse short or long term health effects have been shown to occur from the RF Signals produced by based stations."

Further, as part of its charter to protect public health and in response to public concern over health effects of EMF exposure, the World Health Organization (WHO) established the International EMF Project in 1996 to assess the scientific evidence of possible health effects of EMF in the frequency range from 0 to 300 GHz. The EMF Project encourages focused research to fill important gaps in knowledge and to facilitate the development of internationally acceptable standards limiting EMF exposure.

Since the commencement of the EMF Project, over 50 national authorities have been involved. Apart from the national authorities the project is overseen by 8 international organizations and independent collaborating institutions and together they review scientific information related to public and occupational health, and environmental management of the EMF issue. While summarizing the key points on health effect of EMF radiation, WHO website presently mentions the following:

"â€¦.WHO"s International EMF Project was launched to provide scientifically sound and objective answers to public concerns about possible hazards of low level electromagnetic fields.
Despite extensive research, to date there is no evidence to conclude that exposure to low level electromagnetic fields is harmful to human health..."

In respect of EMF radiations from mobile handsets, WHO in Fact Sheet 193 published in June 2011 has concluded that "A large number of studies have been performed over the last two decades to assess whether mobile phones pose a potential health risk. To date, no adverse health effects have been established as being caused by mobile phone use".

Further, to create awareness among the citizens about above, Department of Telecommunications (DoT) has issued informative guide on 'Mobile Communications-Radio Waves and Safety'. The document covers basic introduction to radio waves, various terminologies, Do's & Don'ts related to mobile phone usage, clarification of various myths regarding deployment, use of Radio waves / Safety Standards and frequently asked questions relating to Mobile phones & Human health. Advertisements for generating awareness about facts related to radiations from BTSs & handsets have also been issued, which have been published in National & Regional Newspapers. Detail information on EMF related matters and steps taken by Government of India in this regard are available on DoT website "www.dot.gov.in" in section "A Journey for EMF". Further, TERM Cells under DoT along with Telecom Industry associations, State governments, BSNL, TRAI etc. have taken active part in various seminars, workshops, press conferences and Public Awareness programs in respect of EMF radiation exposure from BTSs in which press, international technical experts and general public were also present.

Contdâ€¦4/-

Annexure-I

LSA-wise details of number of non-compliant BTSs found exceeding prescribed radiation limits during last three calendar years i.e. 2013 to 2015 and current year 2016 (up to 29.02.2016)

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SN LSA Number of BTSs found exceeding radiation limits during
Year 2013 Year 2014 Year 2015 Year 2016 (up to 29.02.2016) last three years (2013 to 2015) and current year (up to 29.02.2016)
1 Assam NIL 2 NIL NIL 2
2 Karnataka 2 8 6 NIL 16
3 Madhya Pradesh NIL 14 NIL NIL 14
4 Maharashtra 4 NIL NIL NIL 4
5 Mumbai 55 NIL NIL NIL 55
6 Rajasthan 1 NIL NIL NIL 1
7 UP East 10 NIL NIL NIL 10
8 West Bengal NIL NIL 6 NIL 6
Grand Total 72 24 12 NIL 108
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